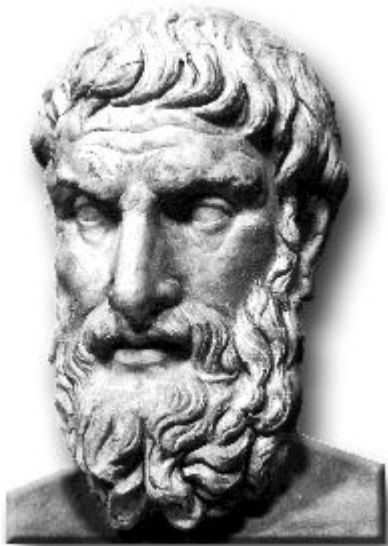


# **Epicurus quotes from the Vatican Sayings**





*Epicurus was an ancient Greek philosopher and the founder of the school of philosophy called Epicureanism. Only a few fragments and letters remain of Epicurus's 300 written works. Much of what is known about Epicurean philosophy derives from later followers and commentators.*

For Epicurus, the purpose of philosophy was to attain the happy, tranquil life, characterized by ataraxia, peace and freedom from fear, and aponia, the absence of pain, and by living a self-sufficient life surrounded by friends. He taught that pleasure and pain are the measures of what is good and evil, that death is the end of the body and the soul and should therefore not be feared, that the gods do not reward or punish humans, that the universe is infinite and eternal, and that events in the world are ultimately based on the motions and interactions of atoms moving in empty space.

### **About the Subjective Well-being Institute**

The Institute of Subjective Well-Being (<http://www.iswb.org/>) is a non-sectarian, non-political institute based in Vancouver (Canada) devoted to sharing both established and pioneering research in the field of subjective well-being.

ISWB blog <http://www.amareway.org/> publishes daily updates about scientific research and spiritual insights about living a happy and meaningful life.



## **Epicurus quotes from the Vatican Sayings**

1. (PD 1) A blessed and indestructible being has no trouble himself and brings no trouble upon any other being; so he is free from anger and partiality, for all such things imply weakness.

2. (PD 2) Death is nothing to us; for that which has been dissolved into its elements experiences no sensations, and that which has no sensation is nothing to us.

3. (PD 4) Continuous bodily pain does not last long; instead, pain, if extreme, is present a very short time, and even that degree of pain which slightly exceeds bodily pleasure does not last for many days at once. Diseases of long duration allow an excess of bodily pleasure over pain.

4. Every pain is easy to disregard; for that which is intense is of brief duration, and those bodily pains that last long are mild.

5. (PD 5) It is impossible to live a pleasant life without living wisely and honorably and justly, and it is impossible to live wisely and honorably and justly without living pleasantly. Whenever any one of these is lacking, when, for instance, the man is not able to live wisely, though he lives honorably and justly, it is impossible for him to live a pleasant life.

6. (PD 35) It is impossible for a man who secretly violates the terms of the agreement not to harm or be harmed to feel confident that he will remain undiscovered, even if he has already escaped ten thousand times; for until his death he is never sure that he will not be detected.

7. For an aggressor to be undetected is difficult; and for him to be confident that his concealment will continue is impossible.

8. (PD 15) The wealth required by nature is limited and is easy to procure; but the wealth required by vain ideals extends to infinity.

9. Necessity is an evil; but there is no necessity for continuing to live with necessity.

10. Remember that you are mortal and have a limited time to live and have devoted yourself to discussions on nature for all time and eternity and have seen “things that are now and are to me come and have been.”

11. Most men are insensible when they rest, and mad when they act.

12. (PD 17) The just man is most free from disturbance, while the unjust is full of the utmost disturbance.

13. (PD 37) Among the things held to be just by law, whatever is proved to be of advantage in men's dealings has the stamp of justice, whether or not it be the same for all; but if a man makes a law and it does not prove to be mutually advantageous, then this is no longer just. And if what is mutually advantageous varies and only for a time corresponds to our concept of justice, nevertheless for that time it is just for those who do not trouble themselves about empty words, but look simply at the facts.

14. We have been born once and cannot be born a second time; for all eternity we shall no longer exist. But you, although you are not in control of tomorrow, are postponing your happiness. Life is wasted by delaying, and each one of us dies without enjoying leisure.

15. We place a high value on our characters as if they were our own possessions whether or not we are virtuous and praised by other men. So, too, we must regard the characters of those around us if they are our friends.

16. No one chooses a thing seeing that it is evil; but being lured by it when it appears good in comparison to a greater evil, he is caught.

17. We should not view the young man as happy, but rather the old man whose life has been fortunate. The young man at the height of his powers is often befuddled by chance and driven

from his course; but the old man has dropped anchor in old age as in a harbor, since he secures in sure and thankful memory goods for which he was once scarcely confident of.

18. If sight, association, and intercourse are removed, the passion of love is ended.

19. He has become an old man on the day on which he forgot his past blessings.

20. (PD 29) Of our desires some are natural and necessary, others are natural but not necessary; and others are neither natural nor necessary, but are due to groundless opinion.

21. We must not force Nature but persuade her. We shall persuade her if we satisfy the necessary desires and also those bodily desires that do not harm us while sternly rejecting those that are harmful.

22. (PD 19) Unlimited time and limited time afford an equal amount of pleasure, if we measure the limits of that pleasure by reason.

23. Every friendship in itself is to be desired; but the initial cause of friendship is from its advantages.

24. Dreams have neither a divine nature nor a prophetic power,



but they are the result of images that impact on us.

25. Poverty, if measured by the natural end, is great wealth; but wealth, if not limited, is great poverty.

26. One must presume that long and short arguments contribute to the same end.

27. The benefits of other activities come only to those who have already become, with great difficulty, complete masters of such pursuits, but in the study of philosophy pleasure accompanies growing knowledge; for pleasure does not follow learning; rather, learning and pleasure advance side by side.

28. Those who are overly eager to make friends are not to be approved; nor yet should you approve those who avoid friendship, for risks must be run for its sake.

29. To speak frankly as I study nature I would prefer to speak in oracles that which is of advantage to all men even though it be understood by none, rather than to conform to popular opinion and thus gain the constant praise that comes from the many.

30. Some men spend their whole life furnishing for themselves the things proper to life without realizing that at our birth each of us was poured a mortal brew to drink.

31. It is possible to provide security against other things, but as far as death is concerned, we men all live in a city without walls.

32. The honor paid to a wise man is itself a great good for those who honor him.

33. The cry of the flesh is not to be hungry, thirsty, or cold; for he who is free of these and is confident of remain so might vie even with Zeus for happiness.

34. We do not so much need the assistance of our friends as we do the confidence of their assistance in need.

35. Don't spoil what you have by desiring what you don't have; but remember that what you now have was once among the things only hoped for.

36. Epicurus's life when compared to that of other men with respect to gentleness and self-sufficiency might be thought a mere legend.

37. When confronted by evil nature is weak, but not when faced with good; for pleasures make it secure but pains ruin it.

38. He is of very small account for whom there are many good reasons for ending his life.

39. Neither he who is always seeking material aid from his friends nor he who never considers such aid is a true friend; for one engages in petty trade, taking a favor instead of gratitude, and the other deprives himself of hope for the future.

40. He who asserts that everything happens by necessity can hardly find fault with one who denies that everything happens by necessity; by his own theory this very argument is voiced by necessity.

41. At one and the same time we must philosophize, laugh, and manage our household and other business, while never ceasing to proclaim the words of true philosophy.

42. The same time produces both the beginning of the greatest good and the dissolution of the evil.

43. The love of money, if unjustly gained, is impious, and, if justly, shameful; for it is inappropriate to be miserly even with justice on one's side.

44. The wise man who has become accustomed to necessities knows better how to share with others than how to take from them, so great a treasure of self-sufficiency has he found.

45. The study of nature does not create men who are fond of boasting and chattering or who show off the culture that

impresses the many, but rather men who are strong and self-sufficient, and who take pride in their own personal qualities not in those that depend on external circumstances.

46. Let us completely rid ourselves of our bad habits as if they were evil men who have done us long and grievous harm.

47. I have anticipated you, Fortune, and entrenched myself against all your secret attacks. And we will not give ourselves up as captives to you or to any other circumstance; but when it is time for us to go, spitting contempt on life and on those who here vainly cling to it, we will leave life crying aloud in a glorious triumph-song that we have lived well.

48. While we are on the road, we must try to make what is before us better than what is past; when we come to the road's end, we feel a smooth contentment.

49. (PD 12) It is impossible for someone to dispel his fears about the most important matters if he doesn't know the nature of the universe but still gives some credence to myths. So without the study of nature there is no enjoyment of pure pleasure.

50. (PD 8) No pleasure is a bad thing in itself, but the things which produce certain pleasures entail disturbances many times greater than the pleasures themselves.

51. [addressing a young man] I understand from you that your natural disposition is too much inclined toward sexual passion. Follow your inclination as you will, provided only that you neither violate the laws, disturb well-established customs, harm any one of your neighbors, injure your own body, nor waste your possessions. That you be not checked by one or more of these provisos is impossible; for a man never gets any good from sexual passion, and he is fortunate if he does not receive harm.

52. Friendship dances around the world bidding us all to awaken to the recognition of happiness.

53. We must envy no one; for the good do not deserve envy and as for the bad, the more they prosper, the more they ruin it for themselves.

54. It is not the pretense but the real pursuit of philosophy that is needed; for we do not need the semblance of health but rather true health.

55. We should find solace for misfortune in the happy memory of what has been and in the knowledge that what has been cannot be undone.

56–57. The wise man feels no more pain when being tortured

himself than when his friend tortured, and will die for him; for if he betrays his friend, his whole life will be confounded by distrust and completely upset.

58. We must free ourselves from the prison of public education and politics.

59. What cannot be satisfied is not a man's stomach, as most men think, but rather the false opinion that the stomach requires unlimited filling.

60. Every man passes out of life as if he had just been born.

61. Most beautiful is the sight of those close to us, when our original contact makes us of one mind or produces a great incitement to this end.

62. If the anger of parents against their children is justified, it is quite pointless for the children to resist it and to fail to ask forgiveness. If the anger is not justified but is unreasonable, it is folly for an irrational child to appeal to someone deaf to appeals and not to try to turn it aside in other directions by a display of good will.

63. There is also a limit in simple living, and he who fails to understand this falls into an error as great as that of the man who gives way to extravagance.

64. We should welcome praise from others if it comes unsought, but we should be concerned with healing ourselves.

65. It is pointless for a man to pray to the gods for that which he has the power to obtain by himself.

66. We show our feeling for our friends' suffering, not with laments, but with thoughtful concern.

67. Since the attainment of great wealth can scarcely be accomplished without slavery to crowds or to politicians, a free life cannot obtain much wealth; but such a life already possesses everything in unfailing supply. Should such a life happen to achieve great wealth, this too it can share so as to gain the good will of one's neighbors.

68. Nothing is enough to someone for whom what is enough is little.

69. The thankless nature of the soul makes the creature endlessly greedy for variations in its lifestyle.

70. Do nothing in your life that will cause you to fear if it is discovered by your neighbor.

71. Question each of your desires: "What will happen to me if

that which this desire seeks is achieved, and what if it is not?"

72. (PD 13) There is no advantage to obtaining protection from other men so long as we are alarmed by events above or below the earth or in general by whatever happens in the boundless universe.

73. That we have suffered certain bodily pains aids us in preventing others like them.

74. In a philosophical dispute, he gains most who is defeated, since he learns the most.

75. The saying, "look to the end of a long life," shows small thanks for past good fortune.

76. As you grow old you are such as I urge you to be, and you have recognized the difference between studying philosophy for yourself and studying it for Greece. I rejoice with you.

77. Freedom is the greatest fruit of self-sufficiency.

78. The noble man is chiefly concerned with wisdom and friendship; of these, the former is a mortal good, the latter an immortal one.

79. He who is calm disturbs neither himself nor another.



80. The first step towards salvation is to attend to one's youth and guard against that which defiles everything through maddening desires.

81. The soul neither rids itself of disturbance nor gains a worthwhile joy through the possession of greatest wealth, nor by the honor and admiration bestowed by the crowd, or through any of the other things sought by unlimited desire.



## What is AmAre?

For situations where answer needs to be short, we summarized with AmAre what we saw as a common denominator of joyful living. For context where more wordy discussion are allowed, considering how vast is the field of well-being, we outlined some of the core topics, plus some ancillary ones, in order to offer a conversation-starter.

In Italian, AmAre means "to love"; in English, interconnectedness: (I)Am (we) Are. AmAre stands for being:

- \* **A** – **A**ware and **A**ccepting
- \* **M** – **M**eaningful and **M**otivated
- \* **A** – **A**ctive and **A**ttentive
- \* **R** – **R**esilient and **R**espectful
- \* **E** – **E**ating properly and **E**xercising

Being **Aware**: aware of context, aware of feelings, intentions. Aware of how we see things, our strengths, values and biases. Aware that, happiness and meaning are not only an end result which shines from far in the future; it is also within us, here and now, and it is about the way we live. Happiness is the way. Through our awareness and actions, we gain the courage to change the things we can change, the serenity to accept the things we can't change. And the wisdom to know the difference.

Being **Accepting**: of things we cannot change, which are

inevitable. Of how other people are, and especially how we perceive them.

Being **Meaningful**, by doing what matters, when it matters.

Being **Motivated** means we cultivate our motivation on a daily basis. Some motivations may be common to all, like to live peacefully and be kind to others. Some are more peculiar. When we pursue a specific goal in our daily life, being motivated means to know what we want to do, by leveraging our strengths and grow the energies necessary to move into Being Active.

Being **Active** is important, because actions bring tangible results. We also need to be **Attentive**, so we can be receptive of the feedback and reactions to what we do in any given context, and adapt. Being active and being attentive are a self-reinforcing loop which brings happiness and other positive results to us and to the people, beings and environment we listen to.

We also need to be **Resilient**. Life is not always a big smiling adventure, sometimes external situations can be tough, so it is important for us to bounce back on our feet. Sometimes, there are factors which do not facilitate our peaceful living, so we need to be persistent.

Being **Respectful** is important, because resilience is about persistence and not growing a hard-skin. Respectful of us, other

people (who are, too, trying to be happy, and likely also trying to live peacefully, sometimes in ways which look different from ours), beings and environment.

**Eating properly**, in terms of quality, quantity and company, is important. For us, and for the impact it has on the environment.

**Exercising** is also important, both for our body and mind.

### **Awareness of our here and now: how to assess it?**

Disclaimer: the tools described in this chapter are a way to facilitate happiness and meaning. **They are not a crystal ball, nor deterministic.** We benefit from the learning process of considering different variables, assessing course of actions and seeing potential results in scenarios. The approach drafted here also allows to measure results, building a useful; repository of aggregated, anonymous subjective well-being data.

AmAre is not a panacea or a quick fixer. It is a framework to initiate reflection and skillful action. It is also an outreach method: there are many points to consider and, literally, every day there are several new research findings published in the field of well-being. AmAre is a way to make our body of knowledge easier to communicate and accessible, so then each of us can see her/his path and walk in appropriate ways. Where appropriate is subjective, it changes from person to person, within the similarities that we have as human being.

A		M		A		R		E	
Aware Accepting		Meaningful Motivated		Active Attentive		Resilient Respectful		Eating Exercising	
G	W	G	W	G	W	G	W	G	W

To assess your current situation, in terms of what facilitates happiness, meaning and fulfilment, please assign in the chart above a weight and a grade to each variable. If there are additional aspects you want to assess, just add as many columns as necessary. As a rule of thumb: too few variables lead to a superficial assessment, too many variables lead to a confused assessment, so try to stay within the ten variables provided plus a few of your own if necessary.

For each variable, please specify:

**w: weight**, importance given to each aspect (sum of all weights should be 100)

**g: grade**, rating given to each aspect (each grade is a value between 0 and 1)

and then use this formula to calculate your AmAre Index:

$$\begin{aligned}
& (AwareW * AwareG) + (AcceptingW * AcceptingG) + \\
& (MeaningfulW * MeaningfulG) + (MotivatedW * MotivatedG) + \\
& (ActiveW * ActiveG) + (AttentiveW * AttentiveG) + (ResilientW \\
& * ResilientG) + (RespectfulW * RespectfulG) + (EatingW * \\
& EatingG) + (ExercisingW * ExercisingG)
\end{aligned}$$

If you want to use a spreadsheet, where you can insert the values and see them automatically calculated, you can use: <http://sps.h.amareway.org/>

### **What does it mean?**

AmAre formula (Happiness is being: Aware and Accepting + Meaningful and Motivated + Active and Attentive + Resilient and Respectful + Eating Properly and Exercising) is meant to be descriptive and preventive, but not predictive. That is, it quantifies the current situation, and the strengths and weaknesses we should be aware of and act upon. Regardless of what the number says, we are always responsible, here and now, for our happiness, so a high result means we should keep building our happiness as we have successfully done so far, and a lower result means there are aspects to act upon to improve our lives.

One of the formula's strengths is its unlikeness to reach One, the perfect score, or Zero. This formula is useful so we can improve our awareness about the situation so far, and build a better present. Once the formula served its purposes, we can move on. Because the ultimate happiness is not reaching number 1, it is in

finding and renewing the appropriate life-dynamics. If we can accept the way life is, and the fact that different people assign different weights and grades to the pillars of their happiness, and still respect and care about all of us, doing our best for the mutual happiness, we are on the way to build together a lasting happy living.

This is a scale to interpret the overall result of the formula:

**0-0.3:** This is an unlikely result, so please double check each value inserted. If values are correct, it is possible the perception of your Subjective Well-Being (SWB) tends toward emphasizing the non-positive aspects, or that there is a short-term serious issue. This means there is a need to work on all your priorities to make them more satisfying to you in the medium term.

**0.31-0.60:** Your level of SWB could be higher, if you are closer to 0.31 result. If you are closer to 0.5, you are near an exact average value where you perceive the same value of positive and non-positive components in your life. In both cases, by working on the AmAre variables (starting from the ones with higher weight and lower grade), you can substantially improve your well-being.

**0.61-0.90:** You tend towards an optimal level of SWB. You feel happy, and likely experienced most or at least many of the happiness "fringe benefits". You likely live joyfully everyday: no matter the ups and downs we all have, you can make the best of them for yourself and the people around you.



**0.91-1:** This result is unlikely to be reached, so please double check each value inserted. If values are correct, you are achieving the maximum level of SWB, which you can sustain by living joyfully.

To interpret the value of each AmAre variable, you can use the same scale. If a variable is high in weight, and low in grade, then it requires attention and action to improve it. If a variable is low in weight, and high in grade, then you may ask yourself if its grade is slightly over estimated.

We suggest calculating your AmAre Index once per week for the first 5 weeks. Then, to calculate it once per month. Please make sure to start from scratch at each calculation, meaning you should not check values assigned in the past; after calculating your current AmAre Index, you can then check what changed compared to the previous calculations. If you want to be reminded about monthly calculation, you can register the AmAre newsletter on <http://www.amareway.org/>

### **How does AmAre facilitate empathy?**

Using an AmAre approach facilitates empathy, mainly by bringing attention to aspects which are important for skillful interaction with people and the context, and by making easier to develop the necessary skills.

**A – Aware and Accepting:** how can we be more aware of people's emotions and thoughts? How to accept that we have many similarities, and also differences?

**M – Meaningful and Motivated:** how can we better understand, and remind to us regularly, the importance of being empathic?

**A – Active and Attentive:** how more appropriate and effective are our actions, once we are empathic? How can we keep attentive to people's feedback, to ensure we connect with their emotions properly, without misinterpreting them?

**R – Resilient and Respectful:** becoming more empathic may take time, and it is an ongoing commitment; how can we cultivate resiliency, so we are able to be empathic even when it is not easy? What are suitable ways to show we respect people's feelings?

**E – Eating properly and Exercising:** how does the food we eat influence the way we relate to others? Which foods nourishes us, and which are taxing on our health? Which exercising and eating habits make easier to relate to other people, and which ones are making us isolated?

Most of facilitation, including facilitating empathy, is done by example. By applying AmAre to cultivate your empathy, and

your happiness, you can then adapt it to the context in which children are. The following chapters are about applying AmAre to daily life, the more familiar you are with it, the easier it will be to leverage AmAre into the daily facilitation of empathy among children.